
Education Committee

HB 1813

Brief Description: Regarding establishing and meeting graduation and reengagement goals.

Sponsors: Representatives Hunt, Probst, Priest, Sullivan, Liias, Quall, Carlyle, Kelley, Santos and Ormsby.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Establishes graduation and reengagement goals for the year 2020.
- Directs the State Board of Education (SBE) to establish annual targets for schools and school districts in order to meet the goals.
- Requires the SBE, in consultation with others, to make recommendations to the Legislature on a focused assistance program and incentives for school districts to improve graduation rates.
- Replaces the Building Bridges work group with the Building Bridges advisory committee and specifies the entities from which membership is drawn.
- Expands the duties of the Building Bridges advisory committee beyond those held by the work group.
- Requires entities with appointed representatives on the advisory committee to, within existing resources, assist with meeting the graduation and reengagement goals.

Hearing Date: 2/6/09

Staff: Cece Clynych (786-7195)

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Background:

Pursuant to its authority to establish accountability measures, the State Board of Education (SBE) has, by rule, established school and school district goals addressing high school graduation rates. Under the SBE's rule, each high school must reach a graduation rate goal of 70 percent in 2009. This rate must increase by three percentage point increments per year through 2013, reaching an 85% rate by 2014.

In 2007, the Legislature directed the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) to create a grant program, known as the Building Bridges Program, to begin the phase-in of a statewide comprehensive dropout prevention, intervention, and retrieval system. A state-level work group was tasked with assisting and enhancing the work of the grantees. In December 2008, the work group recommended to the Legislature that the state should set statutory goals and targets for: (1) the percentage of students that will graduate from high school; and (2) the percentage of youth who have dropped out but will reengage in education.

Pursuant to new federal regulations, a state must set a single graduation rate goal that all high schools must meet annual graduation rate targets that reflect continuous and substantial improvement from the prior year toward meeting or exceeding the graduation rate goal. Beginning with the 2009-10 school year, schools and the state must meet or exceed either the graduation rate goal or the state's targets for continuous and substantial improvement from the prior year.

Summary of Bill:

Graduation and Reengagement Goals

The following graduation and reengagement goals are set:

- By 2020, 95% of students must graduate from high school in four years.
- By 2020, 60% of youth who have dropped out of school must be reengaged in education and be college and work ready.

State Board of Education (SBE)

The SBE is charged with establishing annual graduation rate targets for schools and school districts in order to meet the graduation goals by 2020. These targets must reflect continuous and substantial improvement from prior years and ensure that adequate progress is made by low income and minority students. The SBE is also directed to establish annual targets for reengaging youth who have dropped out.

In consultation with the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) and the Building Bridges advisory committee, the SBE is required to make recommendations to the Legislature on a focused assistance program and incentives for school districts to improve graduation rates. These recommendations are due by December 1, 2009

Building Bridges Advisory Committee

The Building Bridges work group is replaced with an advisory committee. This committee will have a representative appointed by the director of each of the following state agencies: OSPI, Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board (WTECB), State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC), Employment Security Department (ESD), Community Trade

and Economic Development (CTED), Department of Health (DOH), Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS), and Family Policy Council (FPC). The advisory committee shall also have one representative from the following entities:

- Skill centers
- Juvenile courts
- Washington Association of Prosecuting Attorneys
- Washington State Office of Public Defense
- Educational service districts
- Area workforce development councils
- Parent and educator associations
- Local school districts
- Agencies or organizations that provide services to special education students
- Community organizations serving youth
- Federally recognized tribes and urban tribal centers
- Each of the major political caucuses of the Senate and the House of Representatives
- Minority Commissions

The advisory committee's duties are expanded beyond the duties held by the work group. New duties include making recommendations regarding flexible funding, common program eligibility criteria, common objectives and strategies, alignment of resources, common assessment criteria, and connections between education and social service programs at the local level.

Entities with representation on the advisory committee must, within existing resources, develop program objectives and measures to meet the dropout goals and explore opportunities for collaborative action to reduce the dropout problem. The WTECB is charged with advising the advisory committee regarding the best ways to reengage youth who have dropped out.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.